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MEN OF AFFAIRS FAVOR EDUCATION IN GREEK AND LATIN

CINCINNATI TEACHER POLLS PERSONS OF NOTE ON THE BEST COURSE FOR SCHOOLS

Greek and Latin? Higher mathematics? Should either have any place in a high-school course of study?

The Rockefeller General Education Board, which is by way of rendering final decisions on all the vexed questions in the world, has recently published the opinion of its investigators that the study of the classics should be utterly banished from the modern high school, while only such mathematics should be taught as will be of direct and practical use to the student after he leaves school.

In an effort to get some light on the same subject, Professor Harris Hancock of the University of Cincinnati recently sent out a series of questions to several hundred men who have been successful in the professions and in business. The University of Cincinnati is unique in that it is a real municipal university, really a part of the public-school system. Professor Hancock felt, therefore, more than an academic interest in the subject of his inquiry. Himself a teacher of mathematics, he was anxious to get the views of successful men who are not directly connected with the profession of teaching. He first secured the names of thirty men who are nationally prominent as railroad officials, thirty as physicians, and the same number of clergymen, men of affairs, bankers, and lawyers. These men are scattered all over the United States. They are alike only in that they have each achieved unusual success.

To each of them he sent a letter, asking them to answer the following question:

Which of the following courses in a high school would you advise a boy to take?

1. A course where both mathematics and the classics are optional.
2. A course where mathematics is required, the classics being optional.
3. A course where the classics are required, mathematics being optional.
4. A course where both the classics and mathematics are required.

A considerable majority of these men declared their opinion that a boy entering high school should

take the course in which the study of both Latin and Greek and mathematics is compulsory. It is especially remarkable that a clear majority of the big business men believe that the classics and mathematics should be required in a high-school course of study.

To check up his inquiry further, Professor Hancock sent the same question to 180 of the most prominent and successful men in Cincinnati. Included among them were forty-one leading business men.

Again the answers were surprising and in the same way. A majority of all the men who replied favored the course in which both Greek and Latin and mathematics are required. The percentage in its favor was not, however, quite so large as in the first questionnaire. And there were a few more who favored course No. 2, in which mathematics is required, while the classics are optional.

A considerable number of the replies were accompanied by letters explaining them. Some men declined to make a direct answer because they felt that the case of each boy should be studied separately and the decision based on his tastes and talents and the requirements of his future career. Still seeking light, Professor Hancock sent two questions to every teacher of the seventh and eighth grades in the public schools of Cincinnati.

"Out of every one hundred boys you have taught," he asked, "how many do you believe have consulted you regarding their future careers?" And "out of every one hundred boys, how many do you believe have definitely decided on their future careers before entering high school?"

About one hundred answers were received. The teachers agree that on the average not more than six or seven boys out of each 100 have consulted them about their future careers or have reached any definite decision as to what they will do after leaving school.

It is as a result of these and other investigations that Professor Hancock has reached the conclusion that there is a considerable amount of danger connected with the so-called vocational movement in the public schools. In indorsement of his position he quotes the opinion of Dean Herman Schneider of the engineering college of his own university.

"There is a movement in the country," writes Dean Schneider, "in direct vocational guidance in public-school systems which has the indorsement of some public school superintendents. We believe that this movement possesses elements of danger, for the very simple and significant reason that not enough is known to warrant any man in saying to a child, 'This is your job, or this is not your job.' We are convinced that the few experimental psychologists who propose the use of their science in direct vocational guidance should frankly confess that the limitations of their science should warn us against its use at present for such purposes."—HENRY M. HYDE in the *Chicago Tribune*.

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